

6/5- China update, beginning with 2  
apologies, second for going out to  
dinner tonight and first for not anti-  
cipating what Martin Agronsky would do  
on his local CBS TV roundtable show  
last night.

We visited our most conservative  
friends. I mean real conservative.  
Ann called Lil and we went, I know with  
some apprehension on Lil's part because  
Ann is positive and articulate, and  
China has happened since last we saw  
them. Well, I think it is the first  
time ever that we didn't have a single  
argument when we got into politics.  
Does that give you a measure of the  
impact on conservatives?

Mike has a thing on the CBS show  
"60 Minutes". So, he left the table to  
see it and then I left just in case  
Lil and Ann wanted to talk privately.  
First part was a first-rate expose  
of a major swindle/scandal, mobile  
homes. Really good job. Morley Safer  
did the whole show tonight, meaning  
Mike Wallace had time off or is on  
assignment. He wound up the show with  
one of the more brilliant take-offs  
that I'd have taped for you had I  
been home. He presented himself as the  
first reporter from the Peoples'  
Liberation TV News to visit the land  
of the western barbarians since their  
revolution 200 years ago. From that  
point, with appropriate footage, he  
used virtually every cliché from the  
reporting from China and showed how  
apt it is when applied to use as we  
applied it to them. The whole bit. I'd  
forgotten there were that many. Every-  
thing is grey, including the faces, and  
and illustrative footage. Regrettably  
tion. Really it was so good, so  
clever, so complete and so effective  
that while neither tape nor transcript  
can begin to do justice to it, I  
feel, because the camera work was  
so excellent. Real self-ridicule,  
too. But a marvelous lesson for so  
many, including the media. I do  
recommend that if you have it for  
no more than fun you ask CBS for a  
transcript. If you are going to  
write about all of this some time, as  
I do so hope, then even more will you  
want this.

The Agronsky think had Sidey (  
(he is sure there are secret provisos  
now), Lisagor (still talking about  
varnish remover, this time wrung out  
of socks when a bottle spilled in a  
suitcase), Nick Timminish, and Kil-  
patrick (racists, former editor  
Richmond News-Leader, now called not  
racist but conservative). They were  
baffled, poor souls, knowing what  
is expected of them and, in K's case,  
not being able to be rational about  
it, and knowing what they now know.  
There is, for a while, going to be  
some danger of epidemic schizo. in  
the New China Hands. All agreed that  
it was a real spectacular in which  
Chou took Nixon's medium away from  
him. Can't begin to remember all the  
good stuff that got on. One was a  
Chou apology to Nixon for overdoing  
some of the staging to make it look  
good, a scene where in the freezing  
cold all the cameras got happy kids

skipping rope while all the teenagers were listening to transistor radios (collected as soon as scene shot) and the older ones say around playing cards in this park. Like in SF's Chinatown. But I am inclined to agree it had to have been staged in that weather, snow and all. However, the part that I joined the reporters in relishing was Chou's gracious apology, in effect, we laid that on a bit too heavy. Nobody agrees on the communique, spoken or written press, as though it really makes any difference what it means. That is, what, according to the language it means.

Then there were a few minor scraps, like on whether it is regimentation that gets the streets cleaned. They are too young to know that is the way it used to be done everywhere, unless the older ones were born into rich families, who hired others to do it. Lisagor found that because everyone wasn't killing himself it was; on the one hand, unwelcome regimentation and at the same time an vast WPA project. "I haven't seen so much shovel-leaning since WPA". Gotta be history's softest regimentation and easiest dictatorship is everyone feels he can goldbrick. That they didn't feel hot breaths on their necks was not understood, and I think some really doubted it when Sidey said it wasn't for their benefit, that it was universal...I think the first casualty is the by-liner. HW